

Endings

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Summary: Just because Negro Day has just been canceled, doesn't follow that Corny and Maybelle have to stop being friends...poor Corny has to break the news of cancellation.

Endings

A/N No Link/Tracy for a while. The adults have hijacked me. This particular story comes out of imagining who told Maybelle Negro Day was cancelled, and noticing that Corny recognized Inez immediately in the Miss. Hairspray competition.

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Maybelle was chatting with one of the makeup girls when Corny Collins strode into the stage and towards the two of them. Parting from the girl with a smile, the stately woman met him halfway. "Mr. Collins."

"Ms. Stubbs."

She fished out the folder and handed it over. "I brought the music for that new song. Robbie made some changes since y'all last saw it, but nothing big."

"Thank you." He took the folder with a slight smile of thanks, but didn't look at it. He let his control over his expression slip somewhat and Maybelle began to feel concerned.

"Are you alright? You look like your dog just died, honey."

Corny snorted. "You have no idea." He seized her hand, managing to be casually in control without giving offence--that trick amused and impressed her every time. "Walk with me."

She gave him enough of a look to make sure he knew that she noticed how he just took charge but allowed herself to be led, courteously enough, towards one of the studio offices. When they arrived he invited her to one of the chairs, but instead she perched easily on the edge of the desk and fixed him with the same look she used when Inez attempting to communicate something between bounces off the walls. "I'm listening."

He paced for a bit first, as she had suspected, before gathering himself together and standing in front of her, their eyes level. "Negro Day has been cancelled."

Maybelle held herself still and felt a seething mixture of frustration, rage, and resignation. When she finally spoke it was in a deceptively mild tone; "And why is that?"

He pulled himself up on the desk beside her--even in her current state she found it within herself to be amused as he spun around to sit cross-legged facing her, like one of the teenagers he wrangled for a living. His face didn't share her amusement, however. "I'll give you three guesses who, and the first two don't count."

She snorted. "Velma."

"Velma. Apparently she managed to convince Mr. Spritzer that better ratings could be pulled with a program that's," he made air quotes, "'less of a novelty'. And just like that..."

"Negro Day has worn out its welcome." Maybelle sighed heavily, sadness overtaking all other emotions. "I'm gonna have to tell the children, aren't I?"

"I thought you'd want to yourself, yes." His voice was wrung with sincere sympathy. "Poor Inez. She's been counting the days, hasn't she?"

Maybelle laughed sadly. "Like you wouldn't believe. And telling anyone who would listen that she's gonna be the next big dance star." She pulled herself together and stood up, back straight and head held high. "She'll get her chance. Somewhere. Somehow." She turned to face the slender show host as he slid off the desk. "I assume we are still getting paid for the songs."

"If I have to pay it out of my own salary." He hesitated. "Maybelle...you do know I'd stop this if I could, don't you?"

"Oh, I don't doubt that, sugar." She smiled at him and brushed her knuckles against his cheekbone. "You're good people." Then she raised an eyebrow teasingly. "And you're still invited to dinner next week, in case you were wondering."

He grinned at her. "Of course. That's the whole reason I stay on your good side." But he wasn't entirely willing to pretend everything was alright, and he gently--tentatively?--laid his hand on her shoulder. "If I can't come it's because I'm working my fingers to the bone to find new acts. Some idiot cancelled some of our best talent recently."

"Is that so?"

"Yep." He nodded back solemnly. "It will doubtless be a long and grueling process. Might cost the studio more than they want to spend, but I guess we're stuck. They should have thought about that before they acted."

"Damn straight." She caught his hand as it withdrew from her shoulder and squeezed it firmly. "Give 'em a bit of grief for our sake, Corny."

He smiled slightly, smaller and more sincere than his cheesy on-air grin. "My pleasure, Maybelle."

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_/Jedi mind trick/ WRITE CORNY/MAYBELLE FICS. You know you want to. HEED THE CALL OF BIG LOVE! Sure, she's 'the whole tree' and he's a skinny little stick of a man but that just increases the awesomeness.

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End
file.